

that is the principal residence of the examiner, if—

“(A) the applicant satisfies any financial requirements for the credit card account or residential real property loan that are generally applicable to all applicants for the same type of credit card account or residential real property loan;

“(B) the terms and conditions applicable with respect to such account or residential real property loan, and any credit extended to the examiner under such account or residential real property loan, are no more favorable generally to the examiner than the terms and conditions that are generally applicable to credit card accounts or residential real property loans offered by the same financial institution to other borrowers cardholders in comparable circumstances under open end consumer credit plans or for residential real property loans; and

“(C) with respect to residential real property loans, the loan is with respect to the primary residence of the applicant.

“§213. Acceptance of loan or gratuity by financial institution examiner

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Whoever, being an examiner or assistant examiner, accepts a loan or gratuity from any bank, branch, agency, organization, corporation, association, or institution examined by the examiner or from any person connected with it, shall—

“(1) be fined under this title, imprisoned not more than 1 year, or both;

“(2) may be fined a further sum equal to the money so loaned or gratuity given; and

“(3) shall be disqualified from holding office as an examiner.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms ‘examiner’, ‘Federal financial institution regulatory agency’, ‘financial institution’, and ‘loan’ have the same meanings as in section 212.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections of chapter 11 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking the matter relating to sections 212 and 213 and inserting the following:

“212. Offer of loan or gratuity to financial institution examiner.

“213. Acceptance of loan or gratuity by financial institution examiner.”.

AMERICAN DREAM DOWNPAYMENT ACT

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Banking Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 811 and the Senate now proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 811) to support certain housing proposals in the fiscal year 2003 budget for the Federal Government, including the downpayment assistance initiative under the HOME Investment Partnership Act, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, we spend a lot of time talking about homeownership, both in the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee and back in our States. I want to spend just a moment reminding everyone why some of us put so much effort into achieving this very important goal for so many American families.

Homeownership is an asset-building engine for families and neighborhoods,

indeed for society as a whole. When a family buys a home, they are buying more than bricks and mortar. They are buying into a community. With each homeowner, we create another anchor in a neighborhood, another advocate for better schools, safer streets, and small business development.

Expanding homeownership, particularly in struggling areas, will help replace the vicious cycle of decline that we see in some neighborhoods with a virtuous cycle of wealth accumulation and economic growth. Once you own a home, you are able to build equity, equity that can be used to send your children to college, finance your retirement, and serve as a needed reserve to protect against emergencies.

Increasing homeownership, and especially minority homeownership, has long been a national goal. In fact, the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard points out that the 1990s was a period of significant growth in minority homeownership and in mortgage lending to minorities. Unfortunately, over the last few years, we have seen that progress level off as the economy has cooled down.

Today, we bring before the Senate S. 811, the American Dream Downpayment Assistance Act, originally introduced by my colleague on the Banking Committee, Senator ALLARD. This bill authorizes \$200 million for a downpayment assistance program targeted to first time, low-income homebuyers. I support this legislation, and I appreciate the efforts of the Senator from Colorado, as well as Chairman SHELBY. I also note that the bill includes important provisions to expand the supply of affordable rental housing. Senator CORZINE amended the bill to raise the FHA multifamily loan limits to account for the rising costs of producing rental housing. This amendment will facilitate the annual construction of up to 6,000 units of multifamily housing affordable to working families around the country. This is an important contribution to the legislation we are considering.

Likewise, Senator JOHNSON has contributed a provision to make the FHA single family adjustable rate mortgage, ARMs, insurance program more effective. ARMs are an important tool in helping families achieve homeownership, and the Johnson amendment will be a welcome addition to the FHA program.

Finally, I would like to thank Senator STABENOW for bringing to the attention of the committee the special needs of a growing segment of our population, families headed by grandparents. The legislation includes an amendment that will create a demonstration program to examine how existing HUD programs can better serve these families. It also requires HUD to study ways in which barriers to existing programs for these families may be reduced.

Again, I want to thank Chairman SHELBY, as well as Senators ALLARD

and REED, chair and ranking member of the Housing Subcommittee, for all their work on this legislation and for their willingness to work in a bipartisan way to produce a good final product. I also want to thank Chairman OXLEY, Ranking Member FRANK, and the other members of the House Financial Services Committee for their contributions to this process and this product.

I support passage of the American Dream Downpayment Assistance Act and urge it passage.

Mr. ENSIGN. I ask unanimous consent that the substitute amendment at the desk be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read the third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements related to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2216) was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

The bill (S. 811), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

EXTENSION OF NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. ENSIGN. I ask that the Chair now lay before the Senate the House message to accompany S. 1768.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 1768) entitled "An Act to extend the national flood insurance program", do pass with the following amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "National Flood Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2004".

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF PROGRAM.

(a) *EXTENSION.*—The National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 is amended as follows:

(1) *AUTHORITY FOR CONTRACTS.*—In section 1319 (42 U.S.C. 4026), by striking "December 31, 2003" and inserting "March 31, 2004".

(2) *BORROWING AUTHORITY.*—In the first sentence of section 1309(a) (42 U.S.C. 4016(a)), by striking "December 31, 2003" and inserting "the date specified in section 1319".

(3) *EMERGENCY IMPLEMENTATION.*—In section 1336(a) (42 U.S.C. 4056(a)), by striking "December 31, 2003" and inserting "on the date specified in section 1319".

(4) *AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR STUDIES.*—In section 1376(c) (42 U.S.C. 4127(c)), by striking "December 31, 2003" and inserting "the date specified in section 1319".

(b) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—The amendments made by this section shall be considered to have taken effect on December 31, 2003.

Mr. ENSIGN. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate concur in the House amendment, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements related to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.